

# Plan Development and Implementation

*Age by age, the sea here gives battle to the land; age by age, the earth  
struggles for her own, calling to her defense her energies and her creations,  
bidding her plants steal down upon the beach, and holding the frontier sands in  
a net of grass and roots which the storms wash free.*

Henry Beston, 1928

## HOW THE PLAN WAS DEVELOPED

The development of the general management plan involved two interrelated efforts — public involvement and the development of technical data through research studies, interviews, analysis, and mapping. Public participation was used to gather input from anyone interested in the plan. Both of these efforts were critical to ensuring that the plan would respect the needs of year-round and seasonal residents and visitors, and protect the resources of the seashore. The public involvement effort during the development of the draft plan included the following steps:

- An onsite planner was stationed at the national seashore to work on a daily basis with national seashore staff and the local communities.
- The Cape Cod National Seashore Advisory Commission met at critical times throughout the planning process to provide input and advice.
- A general management plan subcommittee of the Cape Cod National Seashore Advisory Commission was established to specifically help on each phase of the plan and to identify potential solutions. The committee consisted of representatives from the advisory commission, the six local communities, the Cape Cod Commission, and the Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management Office.
- Three public meetings were held in the six local communities during key initial phases of the project to discuss the public's general desires for the future of Cape Cod, to review a broad range of preliminary alternatives, and to discuss management objectives and strategies.
- To keep the public informed about the progress of the plan and decisions that were being made, four newsletters were sent to people on the mailing list and made available at public areas for anyone interested in the plan.
- Students from the Harvard Kennedy School of Government were also involved and developed a "Cape Cod Notebook" that addressed future management.

The specific planning steps included (1) assembling an interdisciplinary project team of national seashore staff and national park service specialists, which included individuals with expertise in natural and cultural resource management, interpretation, landscape architecture, and community planning; (2) researching legislative history, authorities, jurisdictional questions, and other legal and technical documents and developing statements of purpose, significance, management philosophy, and primary interpretive themes; (3) mapping and analyzing the national seashore's important resources and public experience; (4) defining potential management zoning for a range of desired resource and social conditions; and (5) developing goals and alternative strategies or actions.

The *Draft General Management Plan* was released for public review and comment from mid-August to December 31, 1996. Between 900 and 1,000 copies of the *Draft General Management Plan* and 700 copies of the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement* were distributed to agencies, organizations, and the general public. Four formal public meetings were held, as well as numerous informal meetings with town boards and other organizations to provide clarifications and to seek input on the content of the plan and its accompanying environmental impact statement. Approximately 365 comment

letters were received, plus numerous comments made at public meetings and workshops. In preparing the final plan, comments from public agencies, organizations, and individuals were carefully considered.

After the formal review period ended, national seashore managers met with each town's board of selectmen and several other organizations to ensure their comments and concerns had been properly understood. Extensive additional information on the meetings and public input is included in the *Final Environmental Impact Statement*. Clarifications and explanations were made throughout the *Final Environmental Impact Statement* as a result of public comment and are documented in volume 2 of that document.

The Federal Aviation Administration participated in the environmental impact process as a cooperating agency. They provided technical information, met to review comments on the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement*, and reviewed various products.

A "Revised Draft General Management Plan" was developed in May 1997 and made available to anyone who requested it as an interim document prior to the release of the *Final Environmental Impact Statement*. An estimated 335 copies were requested, including about 35 copies that were sent to the local towns. About 10 comments in writing or by telephone were received, including an extensive comment package submitted by the town of Provincetown and feedback from meetings with town boards of selectmen. These comments were used to further refine the plan.

The General Management Plan Subcommittee met periodically as needed throughout the process at project milestones. The subcommittee issued three written reports to the full Cape Cod National Seashore Advisory Commission, which were discussed with the national seashore superintendent during their meetings. The first report was issued on May 20, 1994, during the development of the draft plan, and the second report was submitted on November 22, 1996, during the public comment period on the *Draft General Management Plan* and *Draft Environmental Impact Statement*.

The subcommittee comments focused on complex topics of mutual concern to the Outer Cape. Advice and comments were wide-ranging and varied. These included resource management and public use issues such as groundwater, historic properties, resource protection partnership ventures, recreational and educational opportunities, and transportation planning. Lands and national seashore management issues were also discussed, such as expressions of interest in cooperative revisions to zoning of residential properties, the Provincetown airport, community interests, municipal uses, utilities and services, clarification of jurisdictional authorities, recognition of residents of the constituent towns, intergovernmental cooperation, and expiring reservations of use and occupancy.

The final report of the GMP subcommittee was submitted to the advisory commission on December 5, 1997, prior to completion of the *Final Environmental Impact Statement*. The report, which includes a minority report from the town of Provincetown, provides context for future management and is printed as appendix H.

Reading the public comments contained in the two volumes of the *Final Environmental Impact Statement* and additional information available in files at the national seashore headquarters provides valuable background for the context in which the plan has been developed. All comments received on the *Draft Environmental Impact Statement* and the *Draft General Management Plan*, as well

as the “Revised Draft General Management Plan,” are on file at Cape Cod National Seashore headquarters, South Wellfleet, Massachusetts.

## **PLAN IMPLEMENTATION**

To ensure that the strategies of the proposed general management plan are implemented in a coordinated fashion, priorities have been set. To the extent that the plan articulates a new management philosophy or new habits and practices not requiring additional staff and funding, this approach would be adopted immediately as staff begin to address management concerns. Training or consultant assistance may be needed to aid in the development of new skills or techniques to resolve controversial subjects. Feedback will be solicited from the Cape Cod National Seashore Advisory Commission and other partners on the progress made in implementing the plan. The implementation of plan proposals that require additional staff or funding will depend on those elements being provided.

The phasing of the work identified is general in nature. Phase 1 consists of preliminary actions that need to be initiated before undertaking actions in phase 2. Funding realities will likely result in some phase 2 actions for one category being undertaken before phase 1 actions in another category. Additional implementation information follows in the description of additional plans and studies called for in or anticipated as a result of this plan, and in the cost estimates.

### **PHASE 1**

Undertake necessary monitoring or research programs to establish a firm baseline of natural and cultural resource conditions as a basis for decisions on a multitude of complex issues.

Define standards and indicators to identify problem areas and opportunities for improving resource protection and visitor experience.

Develop environmental and cultural compliance documentation to assess alternative implementation actions for site- and issue-specific planning and design.

Complete ongoing site development concept plans and environmental assessments (Fort Hill, the Atwood-Higgins complex, the Pamet cranberry bog, and the former North Truro air force station) and interpretive planning documents. Initiate consensus-based revisions of the Cape Cod National Seashore zoning standards and town zoning bylaws to simplify the private development proposal review process and to make regulations more effective and up to date.

Examine new or improved visitor opportunities through documents such as a trail plan or regional transportation plan.

Inventory national seashore facilities and infrastructure, examine national seashore operations to streamline and improve operational costs and services, and develop an approach to implementing sustainable practices.

Identify potential partnerships to carry out cooperative programs or to evaluate regional issues.

Develop cooperative management mechanisms with the state, towns, and nongovernmental organizations to resolve issues.

Develop legislative proposals for Congress to enable implementation of land protection and other resource management strategies.

Based on the criteria articulated in the plan, evaluate facilities threatened by coastal erosion and residences now under reservations of use and occupancy to prepare for future removal, relocation, or disposition.

Continue to initiate requests for NPS nationwide funding to undertake studies and to maintain, improve, or demolish facilities, as needed.

## **PHASE 2**

In cooperation with local towns, chambers of commerce, and other entities, develop coordinated trip planning and information systems.

Use the results of resource monitoring and research programs conducted in phase 1 to support sound scientific information to guide decision making regarding park activities, uses, and management practices.

Improve and disseminate interpretive and educational brochures, audiovisual media, and displays.

Undertake site improvements specified in development concept plans, including natural and cultural resource preservation, parking and circulation, and visitor amenities.

Engage in cooperative implementation efforts for transportation improvements in the Outer Cape towns.

Undertake rehabilitation and restoration activities of natural and cultural resources, such as the rehabilitation of the Pamet cranberry bog house and the restoration of salt marshes.

Rehabilitate historic structures, including the Penniman house and carriage barn, the Old Harbor Life-saving Station, and the Atwood–Higgins house.

Work with town boards to get new town zoning bylaws enacted for private development review within the national seashore, based on new, jointly developed minimum Cape Cod National Seashore zoning standards.

Engage in cooperative partnerships with nongovernmental organizations to foster resource stewardship and to supplement national seashore educational programs.

Seek new partnerships to provide programs at national seashore facilities such as the former North Truro air force station.

Upgrade national seashore facilities and infrastructure and adjust operations to make them more sustainable.

Remove, reuse, relocate, or dispose of selected facilities threatened by coastal erosion or vacated after occupancy ends.